

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL
St Patrick's Conference Armagh

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

St Patrick's conference of the Society of St Vincent de Paul is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of all its members. Staff and volunteers should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principals of the conference group.

PROTECTING CHILDREN AND WORKERS

We want to make sure that children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with our staff and volunteers. We aim to avoid situations that could put children at risk, and to protect our volunteers and staff from false accusations, by making sure that everyone is aware of the following points

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS SHOULD NEVER

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Be alone with a child
- Take a child home unaccompanied

When these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS SHOULD NEVER

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay (apart from a structured sports activity).
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child - even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves

Sometimes staff and volunteers may have to help children with personal care, particularly if the children are very young or have disabilities. This should only be done with the full understanding and consent of the parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important that all staff and volunteers are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

If a child tells any member of staff or volunteer that they have been abused in any way, they should:

- Listen to the child and reassure them.
- Record the incident.
- Report it to the designated person or leader in charge.
- Do not talk about it with anyone who does not need to know about it.

You are only in a supportive role - not an investigative one.